What is claimed is:

1. A method for preventing or treating a viral infection in a subject, said method comprising administering N-glycolylneuraminic acid or a derivative thereof to said subject in an amount effective to prevent or treat said viral infection.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said viral infection is from an enveloped retrovirus.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said viral infection is from HIV.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said viral infection is from hepatitis virus.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said viral infection is from a herpes virus.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is administered intravenously.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is administered subcutaneously.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is administered orally.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is administered by inhalation.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is administered transdermally.

11. The method of claim 1, said method further comprising monitoring said subject for the presence of said viral infection.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said amount of N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is about 1 mg to about 1000 mg per administration.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein said amount of N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is about 10 mg to about 100 mg per administration.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said amount of N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is about 30 mg to about 80 mg per administration.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein said amount of N-glycolylneuraminic acid or said derivative thereof is administered daily.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein N-glycolylneuraminic acid is administered.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein said derivative is phosphorylated N-glycolylneuraminic acid.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein said derivative is sulfated N-glycolylneuraminic acid.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein said N-glycolylneuraminic acid is synthetic.

20. The method of claim 16, wherein said N-glycolylneuraminic acid is extracted from a biological sample.

21. A method for treating an immune mediated disease in a patient, said method comprising administering N-glycolylneuraminic acid or a derivative thereof to said patient in an amount effective to treat said immune mediated disease in said patient.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein said immune mediated disease is cancer.

23. A method for preventing or treating a pathogenic infection in a patient, said method comprising administering N-glycolylneuraminic acid or a derivative thereof to said patient in an amount effective to prevent or treat said pathogenic infection.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein said pathogenic infection is a bacterial infection.

25. The method of claim 23, wherein said pathogenic infection is a parasite.

26. The method of claim 23, wherein said pathogenic infection is influenza.

27. The method of claim 23, wherein said pathogenic infection is malaria.

28. A method for treating a blood product intended for transfusion into a subject, said method comprising adding N-glycolylneuraminic acid or a derivative thereof to said blood product in an amount effective to reduce or eliminate the risk of infection of said subject with a pathogen associated with transfusion of said blood product.

29. A method for treating a viral infection in a subject, said method comprising administering a first anti-viral agent and a second anti-viral agent to said subject in amounts effective to treat said viral infection, wherein said first anti-viral agent is N-glycolylneuraminic acid or a derivative thereof.

30. The method of claim 29, wherein said first and second anti-viral agents are conjugated to each other.

31. The method of claim 29, wherein said second anti-viral agent is a reverse transcriptase inhibitor or a protease inhibitor.